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Prof. Anil Kumar Questions and Answers in Illinois, USA

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OM...OM...OM...

Sai Ram

With Pranams at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan,

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

YOU ARE THE SUPREME SELF, NOT THE BODY

How to know God is within us? Please explain.

How do you know that God is not within you? To say that God is not within me or to say that God is within me, 'I' should be present. It is this 'I' who says, "God is in me." It is 'I' who says, "God is not in me." This 'I'-ness is God; that Self is God.

As Baba has repeatedly said, when you say, "This is my hand," you are separate from the hand. When you say, "This is my dress," you are separate from your dress. When you say, "This is my car," you are separate from the car. You are the owner of the car, but not the car. Similarly, you are the owner of the body, but you are not the body. So, by this theory of negation you will understand, "I am not the body, I am not the mind, I am not the intellect; I am the supreme Self.

*Kshetragnam Chaapimam Vidvi,
Sarva Ksehtreshu Bharatha
Kshetra Kshetragna Yor Gnanam,
Yadgnanam Matammama.*

*That knower,
That knower - the one who knows,
The one who speaks,
That seer, that experiencer,
That Self is Divine.*

You go to sleep; you are fast asleep. Who will wake you up? You are sleeping and snoring. Today I could sleep while coming in the car also. My snoring disturbed me, so then I woke up. (*Laughter*) Thank God I have not disturbed my friend, Mr. Anand, who drove me this far.

So, when I was fast asleep, who woke me up the next morning? I have eaten food; who is digesting it? Who is responsible for the heartbeat? Therefore, when you question the cause and effect, you will understand this. Baba clearly says:

*Pogaku Moolamu Kanthipunjamunda,
Automatic Light Ku Avadulunda
Ee Jagatini Shrustimpa Okadvundavalade.*

*Just like there cannot be smoke without a fire,
There cannot be a pot without the potter,
There cannot be a jewel without the goldsmith.
So the creation must necessarily have the Creator.*

Thank you for a nice question.

BODY IS MOVING TEMPLE AND INDWELLER IS PRESIDING DEITY

When will Swami allow us to build His temples, since so many Shirdi Baba temples are coming up worldwide? Sathya Sai devotees want to build grand temples for Swami. Why won't He allow us this?

What is the temple?

*Deho Devalayo Prokto,
Jeeva Deva Sanathana.*

*Body is the moving temple;
You don't need any other temple.
Body itself is the moving temple.
The indweller is the presiding deity.*

Jeeva Deva Sanathanah.

*The eternal Self is God here,
While the body is the moving temple.*

We don't need to build temples. As my little experience tells me, in many places people join to construct a temple. Soon after its inauguration, they fight with each other.

Kattukovatamu – Kottukovatam

Kattukovatam – they construct,
Kottukovatam – they fight with each other.

Why does it happen?

The people who donate want to have an upper hand, while those people who work want to have an upper hand as well. So, both of them will fight with both their hands. (*Laughter*) That is the tragedy. So, better we make use of the existing temples. We are not running short of temples.

The Shirdi Baba temple is as much a Sathya Sai Baba temple. To illustrate this, Baba told this story. Once there was a heated argument between Shaivites (devotees of Lord Shiva) and Vaishnavites (devotees of Lord Vishnu) in the court of a king. All Shaivites declared that Shiva is greater than Vishnu. All Vaishnavites started fighting saying that Vishnu is greater than Shiva.

Finally, the king gave this pronouncement: “You Vaishnavites do not know who Vishnu is! You Shaivites do not know who Shiva is!” Why did he say that? “If you know Shiva, you will see Shiva in Vishnu also. If you know Vishnu, you will see Vishnu in Shiva also. So, none of you have understood!” That’s what Baba said, speaking about this particular episode during one of His talks.

Therefore, a Shirdi Baba temple is as much a Sathya Sai Baba temple. But still, if you so wish or if the wish is so deep—if we declare from the heart of our hearts that we are not going to fight for our positions, then we may think of doing so (building a temple) with the Divine approval. But only do this slowly, after repeated considerations—a thousand times at least. Let not this project be “Bhasmasura *hasta*” (Bhasmasura is a demon who brought about his own ruin; Bhasmasura *hasta* means ‘the self-destructive hand of Bhasmasura’), leading our lives to total ruin. Let us take time and ask Swami later. There is no hurry.

BHAGAVAN IS NOT FOR CONVERSION

When will the Shirdi devotees realise that both Sai’s are the same? Why have they not realised this yet?

I see! Sathya Sai Baba is not for conversion. Let us be very clear! He is not in a hurry to spread. He has not instructed us to convert Shirdi devotees to Sathya Sai devotees. It is not our job. We have not become so great that we can convert anybody.

Who brought us here first of all? Who made you and me? It is Baba! So believe in Baba, no third person.

*Kalata Theerchu Nokachota Kalalona Kanipinchi,
Dhyna Manduna Tochi Dariki Cherchu
Manchi Lone Vundi Manchiki Nadipinchi,
Nitya Shanthi Daayi Sathya Sai,
Nitya Shanthi Daayi Sathya Sai.*

*Baba appears in our dreams and solves our problems,
While in meditation He gives you a beautiful manifestation—
A vision solving your problems.
All your goodness is encouraged.
That Goodness, Truth and Beauty are Baba.*

So, it is His job to reform and transform. It is not our business! Besides, we cannot change anybody. At the most, we can set ourselves as the best examples for others to emulate, to copy and to learn from. Thank you very much. (*Applause*)

AUSPICIOUS MANIFESTATIONS OF VIBHUTHI AND NECTAR

Oh, oh! This question is written in Telugu: *Baba photo nundi vibhuthi, tene vachuchuchunadi, dayachesi karanamu cheppagalara? Pakka Telugu, Ah! Dayachesi Cheppagalara. Bhagundhi! Chunnadi daggare sarigga ledu. (Laughter) Okay, it's alright! Present continues kada ani vaaderu papam!*

Vibhuthi comes out from Baba's picture and honey comes out from Baba's picture. What is the reason?

Are you threatened by that? Do you fear such things? The nectar appearing on Baba's picture, or *vibhuthi* appearing on Baba's picture are good omens. It is a sort of a blessing, a sort of protection, and an indication that good things will happen in your life. It can also act to save you from danger, as a kind of rescue. So, it is a kind of blessing, a sort of protection, to all devotees. *Vibhuthi* and nectar!

But don't put to me this next question: "Nothing is appearing on our pictures, so am I not going to be protected?" (*Laughter*) So, let me put some *vibhuthi* on your photo; when you are not producing it there, let me paste it on your photo! (*Laughter*) There are some successful people who are duping like that.

My friends, let me give you one example: Swami materialised *vibhuthi* to a lady devotee, while passing along the *darshan* line. Some of our students came and said, "Sir, she is very lucky because she got *vibhuthi* from Swami."

I said, "She has no children so far. He gave *vibhuthi* so that she will conceive. You want that *vibhuthi*, so that you will have a child now?" (*Laughter*)

The students said, "Sir, I don't want it." (*Laughter*) So, He knows what to give, when to give, why to give, and to whom to give!

There is one gentleman with whom Swami started speaking every day. Our Srinivasan from Ananthapur knows him very well. (I will whisper his name into his ear later, but not in public.) Swami talked to him both in the morning and evening. Everyone used to feel how lucky he is! But that man is suffering from cancer! Do you want Swami to talk to you both in the morning and evening? (*Laughter*) Then develop cancer now! (*Laughter*)

I do not know why this sort of comparison and competition takes place. Such ideas take you nowhere. Just rely on yourself. Swami knows what to do. So let's not worry. Let us not think that such a thing should also happen to me. God forbid, no, no, no!

But anyway, *vibhuthi* and nectar appearing on Swami's picture is certainly a *mangalakara*, meaning 'that which is auspicious'. Sai Ram. (*Applause*)

ORGANISATION WILL PROVIDE YOU ANY NUMBER OF OPPORTUNITIES

When we follow and believe in Sai, why should we be active in the Sai organisation?

Oh, oh! This person finds some problem in the Sai organisation. (*Laughter*) Some problem! Yes, yes! Baba said, "I have nothing to do with the organisation." Please take it from me: though the organisation bears His name, we are in the organisation for our benefit and not to benefit Swami. He has said many times, "I have nothing to do with the organisation." Therefore, you can be a devotee and not a member of the organisation.

But then, some of you may ask me, "Mr. Anil Kumar, are you a fool to be a state president in the organisation?" I am not a fool.

In the organisation what happens is that you start moving with like-minded people. Somebody will come and tell you that this has happened to them in their life. Somebody will come to me and tell about some miracles that have happened in their life, or how Swami appeared in their dream and said this, and so on and so forth. Thus, you will have that *satsang* or good company. So, we are in the organisation in order to move among like-minded people so that we can share our experiences together. That is one point.

And secondly, there we can join in group singing or *bhajan*, which give such good vibrations! *Bhajan* is the main door to the mansion of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. *Bhajan* first, other things next! You see, people from Latin America, in countries like Mexico, Brazil, Argentina—they speak Portuguese in Brazil and Spanish in Mexico and Argentina—how wonderfully they sing! What a melody it is! So, *bhajan* is something that touches your heart. Straight after joining the organisation, you will have this pleasure of singing together and experiencing those wonderful vibrations.

Thirdly, the organisation will provide you with a number of opportunities to serve. You cannot serve all alone; but together we can serve. If you take joining the organisation in the negative sense, you will be damaging yourself. So, see the number of positive things about it.

I tell you what: without the organisation, none of us would have been as comfortable and as healthy as we are today. When you go abroad to any other country, name the country, if you say that you are from the Sai organisation, no verification is necessary. No verification is necessary! I am not bluffing.

A simple example: when my eldest daughter was to travel by flight from Bangalore to Bombay, I was carrying my grandson, while she (my daughter) passed through the security gate. I didn't even realise that the child also needed a ticket, because in our trains we can go like that. On buses we can go like that; we don't have to buy the ticket for a small child. So, she had left already, but the child is with me. Then the child started conveniently crying! (*Laughter*) My daughter cannot come back, neither can I go forward! Passing through security gate is over for her, while I am most insecure outside!

I didn't carry enough of money with me either to buy another ticket. What is to be done? Then I went straight to the ticket counter and said, "I am the Principal of Sathya Sai College. I didn't realise that a baby only months in age also requires a ticket. What am I to do?"

“Oh! You are from Baba’s college? You can pay the amount later. Take this ticket,” the person at the ticket counter said. (*Applause*)

Once I went to Bangkok, Thailand. I was standing in a long queue there. There was so much luggage, including books, which people gave as gifts, that the authorities said I needed at least two more suitcases! What to do?

‘What to do?’ I thought, ‘I don’t know the cases in the court, nor did I ever file any suits in court. Then, how about the suitcases? What am I to do?’ (*Laughter*)

Then, one lady came there and said, “At the counter, you seemed to be bothered. What do you want?”

I said, “I just have so much of luggage, what to do?”

“No checking, just go straight,” she said. No checking, go straight! That’s all. Why? The answer is Sathya Sai Baba! I got all the credibility and accountability because of Him.

Then in the beginning, I got my passport and visa to go to Tokyo. I didn’t realise that a separate visa was necessary for Bangkok. I didn’t realise it. When I got down there, they asked me where the visa was. *Visalu levu? Meesalu levu.* (*Laughter*) (*Applause*) “I don’t have, so what am I to do?”

They said, “You can’t go!”

I thought, ‘I see! What is there? I can go back.’

At that time, one gentleman comes to me and asks, “You are Mr. Anil Kumar?”

I replied, “Yes sir!”

He said, “Please follow me. What is the problem?”

“He is asking for my visa, which I had no idea I needed,” I replied.

He took me to one cabin, where he took my photograph immediately. Then, he took me somewhere else where I was stamped in. He then said, “You walk with me.”

“*Array!* What about my luggage?” I asked.

He said, “It will follow you, don’t worry.”

Thus, I could avoid the long queue. I came out and asked that gentleman his name, not till then! I was worried where I would be! (*Laughter*) That man said, “I am Jum Sai from Thailand. I know you from there. I am a member of the parliament and related to the royal family, so you don’t have to pass through all this. Come on straight!” That is Sathya Sai Baba. That is Sathya Sai Baba! (*Applause*)

I can also tell you this: after all, I am just a lecturer, coming from Guntur, working in an affiliated college, that's all. After coming to Swami, let me tell you what happened. Two or three years ago, I had been to Sri Lanka. The Prime Minister there happened to be a devotee of Baba. He invited me to his house and arranged a dinner. There I could see the Indian flag and the flag of Sri Lanka. Also photographers took our photos along with Cabinet Ministers and Supreme Court officials. It is difficult here in India to seek audience with even the revenue officer or *taluk mandal* officer (very local officials). But here I was with the Prime Minister! Why? Because with Sai, you are everything; without Him, you are nothing! (*Applause*) That is a message that I can tell you out of my own personal experience. (*Applause*)

I also very well remember there in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, the Foreign Affairs Minister asked me, "Would you please come to our office?" I went there and number of reporters and journalists interviewed me and took photographs of me with the External Affairs Minister. How is all this possible? To whom I owe all this position? To whom I owe all the responsibility, the name and fame?

All of us understand this. Whether you recognise it or not, we are all like this. It is all because of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba alone, nothing else! Sometimes we may feel, 'I am great, I am responsible.' No, no, no! You are closer to a total downfall if you think this way. Better we recognise that He is behind us, that He is the backbone of our life, so that we can move in society with our heads held high.

Abdul Kalam, the former President of India, once came to Prashanthi Nilayam. He gave the Convocation Address that evening. After the talk was over, at 8:30 p.m., he was wearing shorts and going around to the shed Nos. 21, 31 (where *seva dal* people, retired people, pediatric and geriatric groups stay)! Security people could not find Abdul Kalam anywhere! (*Laughter*) Where was he? He was already there near the sheds saying, "Sai Ram" to everybody! He said, "I am here as a devotee of Baba, not as the President of India." What more do you want? What more do you want?

It was Justice Parthasarathy Valluri, the former High Court Chief Justice, who visited Guntur and said, "You know, I have not come here in the capacity of High Court Chief Justice. No! I have come here as a Sai devotee!" Thus declared the High Court Chief Justice V. Parthasarathy. What more do you want?

Long ago, Dr. Bhagavantham visited Baba, and in one of the meetings he said, "I have not come here as Advisor to the Defense Council of India. I have come here as a devotee of Sathya Sai Baba."

It was Padmakar Gair, the High Court Chief Justice of West Bengal, who said in front of Bhagavan, there in Brindavan, in one of her talks, "Today after coming to Swami, after going through the course on Education of Human Values, I realise that I derive greater pleasure in helping my husband tie his shoe lace than in pronouncing judgment there in the High Court." That is Sathya Sai Baba and the effect of His message. What more do you want?

Therefore my friends, it is time to realise that our breath, our health, everything is because of Bhagavan. You can also verify with all the elders here. Let's compare ourselves with those of our age group elsewhere, who are afflicted with numerous diseases like spondylitis, arthritis, bronchitis, and so on. Instead we have "Sai-itis"! That's what we find here! (*Applause*)

(Laughter) We have got some meaning in life; we have got some hope in life, some purpose in life, a direction in life – all because of Swami! With Swami, life is meaningful. With Swami, life is beautiful. With Swami, life is purposeful. Without Swami, life is no life at all.

Just compare ourselves, and then also think about our children and how nicely they are brought up with Bal-Vikas, Education in Human Values, and Educare. These children are so nice. Also later, our children get married easily because otherwise, who will get such good fellows so easily? One doesn't need any verification! Yes, yes! Sai is our witness, and Sai is by our side. May Sai be with you forever and ever, ever more! Jai Sai Ram. *(Applause)*

EVERY REGION HAS GOT ITS REGIONAL APPROACH

Can you kindly provide us some advice and guidance for our group trip to Prashanthi Nilayam from our region?

You see, I can give you advice from the background of Andhra Pradesh, the place to which I belong. But I cannot give Andhra Pradesh advice to the Chicago people! *(Laughter)* Also, Chicago people cannot advise Andhra people. Every region has got its regional approach. But one thing is true—this is a golden opportunity beyond any doubt! This is a lifetime's opportunity, no question about it!

I can tell you this: the success of the trip depends upon the level of discipline that we maintain and the silence we observe once we are over there. We should act in such a way that Swami will be drawn to us. We should also let those people who are quite new and who are natives of this country sit in the front rows. Swami appreciates this. Swami, to the extent I know, does not like any kind of show or publicity. The more chances you give to the newcomers, the more opportunities you give to the native people of this land, the more you will be appreciated.

Therefore, I am sure that you will take these points into consideration while making your trip over to India. Also, people should not complain. I saw one group near the canteen; I also saw one group outside, near the Gopuram Gate. Let us all move together, so that Swami will feel proud of you. He should tell everybody that here is the group from Chicago.

“Meeru unnaru, emi prayojanamu? Choodu ekkadanunchi vacchinaru...enta baagunnaru. Chi, Chi!”

If He says to the local fellows, “You are horrible,” that means you, the Chicago group, are wonderful! So that is the Upanishadic approach: the praising of somebody happens by condemning of the other group. That's how He does it! *(Laughter)*

I am sure you don't need to be advised, I heard about one of your meetings which you had on the 16th. I believe some of the people could not participate in the Cleveland *satsang* we had on that day because of that meeting. But it is good enough that the top leaders could give them some attendance exemption with NOC (No objection certificate), provided they attend the second meeting. *(Laughter)* Very good! I thank you all for attending at least, because the hall cannot be empty. *(Laughter)* So, I thank you for honoring me that way. I wish god-speed, and may your trip be a thundering success!

I thank each and every one of you for having come here, all the way from different parts of Chicago. I know many of these faces, which are very, very familiar to me. One gentleman who took me to his house has shown me a bundle of DVD's covering my talks. I also know another gentleman who has total control of the public address system. So, I know many, many faces. I know the magician, who also joins the music group over there. I am highly indebted to you and very grateful to you for your gracious presence.

Thank you very much! (*Applause*)

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